GBIO 441   Biology Seminar   Spring 2012
Monday 4:00 – 5:50

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**COURSE OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENTS:**
1. To develop the ability to review and critique scientific journal articles on a **focused topic** in biology.
2. To develop a PowerPoint presentation on a selected topic in biology. Important components of giving scientific presentations will be discussed in class.
3. To strengthen oral communication skills.
4. To review general knowledge of biology. Students will be responsible for reviewing a list of topics in the text that will correspond to weekly topic quizzes. In addition, at the end of the course there will be a comprehensive final exam based on all of the material reviewed.

**Main components of GBIO 441 ➔ THE CAPSTONE COURSE:**
1. Mini Presentation
2. Major Presentation (half of your grade)
3. Weekly Quiz ... each quiz covers one of nine topics
4. Comprehensive Final

**GBIO 441 Seminar Schedule Spring 2012 – Monday**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 23</td>
<td>Organizational meeting. <strong>Begin thinking of possible presentation topics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Searching Library Databases (Second floor computer lab in NBB).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 6</td>
<td>Instruction on PowerPoint Presentations (Second floor computer lab in NBB).</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Research Day – No Class – Cell Biology quiz online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>MARDI GRAS – No Class</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong><em><strong>FRIDAY FEB 24 – ALL Students MUST Have Major Presentation Papers/Topics</strong></em> Formally Approved by NOON today</strong>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Cell Physiology quiz – 1st group’s mini presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar  5</td>
<td>Genetics quiz – 2nd group’s mini presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Evolution quiz – Major Presentations 1 &amp; 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Microbiology quiz – Major Presentations 3 &amp; 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Plant Biology quiz – Major Presentations 5 &amp; 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr  2</td>
<td>Animal Diversity quiz – Major Presentations 7 &amp; 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK – No Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Animal Physiology quiz – Major Presentations 9 &amp; 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Ecology quiz – Major Presentations 11 &amp; 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Quiz Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>May  7</td>
<td>Comprehensive Final Exam – 4:00 - 6:00 – <em>Our regular class time</em></td>
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A) Mini Presentation Based on Topic Drawn at Random:

1. Each student will give a 5-7 minute PowerPoint presentation followed by a 2-3 minute question/answer period about their topic. The idea is that you will teach us about this topic. After your presentation, we should be able to describe exactly what this topic is about and its relevance/importance in biology.

The main goal of this component of the course is to give you practice at developing/organizing and presenting a topic and feedback on your efforts so that you can better prepare for your 30 min presentation, which receives a much greater weight in the course.

B) Major Presentation Based on Primary Scientific Journal Article:

1. Each student will give a 30 minute PowerPoint presentation (two presentations each week), followed by a 5 – 10 minute question/answer period about their presentation. At least 20 minutes of your presentation will be based on the information contained in your PRIMARY SCIENTIFIC JOURNAL ARTICLE. ***VERY IMPORTANT NOTE: You WILL be graded on time. If your presentation is 5 min short or long, the highest grade you can earn is 92%. If your presentation is 10 min short or long, the highest grade you can earn is 85%. If your presentation is 15 min short or long, the highest grade you can earn is 75%, etc. Basically, what this means is that you need to practice and time your talk. Be sure to modify your content based on whether you tend to speed up or slow down when you are in front of a group or when you are nervous.

Your presentation should include clear statements of the main points, background material that teaches basic concepts and puts your article into context, and the critical information, results, and conclusions, contained in your journal article. See the Grading Criteria handout sheet for other hints on what to or not to include. Also, come prepared with your own insights or questions to generate discussion in case a discussion doesn’t immediately get started.

2. A DETAILED outline of your presentation, a bibliography, and a copy of your primary (representative) journal article must be provided to the instructor on the day of the presentation. The bibliography should be in the same format as that observed in scientific journals articles. Use your main article as a template. If you have questions, see the instructor well in advance of when you are scheduled to present. Outlines and bibliographies turned in late will be docked 2% for each day past the due date.

3. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation (to be loaded onto the class laptop computer) should be provided to the instructor by the morning of the day you are to present. You can send the file as an email attachment or can bring it by my office on a flash drive. If you wait until class time and your presentation doesn’t load on the computer or otherwise has some problem, your presentation grade will be docked 2% for every 5 minutes we have to wait.

4. Topic selection AND YOUR PRIMARY ARTICLE must be approved by the instructor. The presentations will be on a topic selected by the participants. Note: In order to have sufficient information to present, you need to choose an article that has
LOTS of DATA in the form of FIGURES and TABLES that you can talk about and explain.

5. Articles and topics must be formally approved by NOON on Friday, Feb. 24 ... anyone who has NOT received approval by that time will have 2% points deducted from their presentation grade for every day that they are late.

6. Sources: Material for the presentations will be obtained from at least FIVE possible sources. AT LEAST THREE of these sources must be used from the following types of source material:
   a. Scientific Journal articles (peer-reviewed)
      **YOUR PRIMARY ARTICLE/SOURCE MUST BE A JOURNAL ARTICLE!!!!**
      Review articles MAY NOT be used as the main journal article. Your article should be no more than SIX years old.
   b. Technical books (citations included in the text)
   c. Textbooks
   d. Newspaper/magazine articles (e.g. NY Times Science section),
   e. Material obtained from the internet (with caution, CDC, NIH, USDA etc. are ok).
      It is preferred that few websites are used. The purpose of the course is for you to utilize the library, not the internet.

7. Images for the presentation can be obtained from a wide range of sources, including instructional CDs for the textbook, images obtained from the internet (be sure you cite the url), as well as some additional sources discussed in class (e.g. scanned images from reference materials).

C) TOPIC QUIZZES:

Each week students will take a test on a specific area of biology. There will be nine tests given over the semester. Tests will consist of 15 questions. Bring a Scantron A and #2 pencil to each class. There will be NO MAKE-UPS for topic tests. The lowest topic test score will be dropped. Because topic tests are given each week, attendance is mandatory. Attendance is a very important component of participating in a seminar course.

REVIEW OF AREAS IN BIOLOGY: Students will be responsible for reviewing various areas in biology over the course of the semester. A list of objectives will be provided to aid in this review, as well as noting the corresponding reading from the text.

D) FINAL EXAM:

One multiple choice exam covering all nine areas in biology reviewed in class will be given at the end of the semester. This will be a valuable learning experience that will allow students to
gauge their general understanding of biology. It also will be useful for students taking the GRE and other standardized biology tests as part of their career.

E) GRADING:

1. **Mini Presentation (10%)** Presentations will be graded by the instructor based on overall content, clarity, organization, ability to answer questions thoughtfully, presentation style, creativity, and timing. The example grading sheet indicates exactly what aspects you will be graded on and the scale that will be used.

2. **Major Presentation (45%)** Presentations will be graded by the instructor based on overall content, clarity, organization, ability to answer questions thoughtfully, presentation style, creativity, and timing. The example grading sheet indicates exactly what aspects you will be graded on and the scale that will be used.

   **NOTE:** THE INFORMATION FROM THE JOURNAL ARTICLE SHOULD COMPRISE 20 MINUTES OF THE PRESENTATION!

   **GRAPHS, TABLES, AND FIGURES FROM THE JOURNAL ARTICLE MUST BE INCLUDED IN THE PRESENTATION TO HIGHLIGHT CRITICAL ASPECTS OF THE ARTICLE.**

   **IMPORTANT** I AM NOT LOOKING FOR A REVIEW ON A PARTICULAR TOPIC, RATHER, YOU NEED TO READ, CRITIQUE, SUMMARIZE AND PRESENT A SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PAPER TO YOUR FELLOW STUDENTS.

3. **Major Presentation – Outline and bibliography (5%).** Each participant will provide the instructor with an outline of their presentation, a bibliography (using standard citation format), and a copy of the journal article (pdf document sent as email attachment is fine).

4. **Topic Tests (20%)** The total test grade (8 quizzes x 15 questions) will constitute a quarter of the grade for this class. The lowest test grade of the 9 total quizzes will be dropped.

5. **Final Exam (15%)** The exam given at the end of the semester will be a 100 question multiple choice exam covering all the material reviewed over the course of the semester.

6. **Participation (5%)** Your participation grade will be based on your attendance, your contribution to the discussion and # of questions asked, and your ability to stay off your cell phone.

**PLAGIARISM:** Plagiarism is the use of another person’s words or ideas without giving proper credit and is a serious offense. ALL sources utilized in your presentation must be cited properly, including webpages, images, books, journal articles, etc. If you do not know how to cite information please see me before your presentation.
Use of someone else’s presentation IS Plagiarism. Also, it is NOT okay to use a presentation you gave in another class.

**Keep in mind, if you can find it, so can I!** Also, remember that professors and other students can and do talk. Plagiarism will result in a grade of F on your presentation, and you will likely fail the course.

**Important University Policies:**

**Disabilities:** "If you are a qualified student with a disability seeking accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to self-identify with the Office of Disability Services, Room 203, Student Union. No accommodations will be granted without documentation from the Office of Disability Services."

**Children:** “The classroom is not a place for children and students are not to bring their family members for day care or baby sitting.

**Cell phones, etc:** Use of cell phones (including TEXTING), headphones, and beepers during class is inappropriate. These are very disruptive to anyone presenting. Silence them AND put them away. If there is some specific emergency reason why these need to be on, please let me know in advance.

**Civility:** “Free discussion, inquiry, and expression are encouraged in this class. Classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor's ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of students to benefit from the instruction is not acceptable. Examples may include routinely entering class late or departing early; use of beepers, cellular telephones, or other electronic devices; repeatedly talking in class without being recognized; talking while others are speaking; or arguing in a way that is perceived as “crossing the civility line.” In the event of a situation where a student legitimately needs to carry a beeper/cellular telephone to class, prior notice and approval of the instructor is required.” Classroom behavior which is deemed inappropriate and cannot be resolved by the student and the faculty member may be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs for administrative or disciplinary review as per the Code of Student Conduct which may be found at [http://www.selu.edu/StudentAffairs/Handbook/](http://www.selu.edu/StudentAffairs/Handbook/).

**Email:** **Important messages related to the course will be sent to students via email using Blackboard. Please check your email frequently, i.e. at least every couple days.** Per University Policy, I can only respond to e-mails that are from your SELU account. Please include Biol 441 in the subject line.

**Academic Integrity:** **Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity.** Behavior that violates these standards is not acceptable. Examples are the use of unauthorized material, communication with fellow students during an examination, attempting to benefit from the work of another student and similar behavior that defeats the intent of an examination or other class work. Cheating on examinations, plagiarism, improper acknowledgment of sources in essays and the use of a single essay or paper in more than one course without permission are considered very serious offenses and shall be grounds for disciplinary action as outlined in the current General Catalogue.